



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH**

HUGH MORRISON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

AND

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

G. M. PAWSON, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

OF THE

BOROUGH OF TAUNTON
FOR THE YEAR 1968



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Public Health Department,
Chadwick House,
11 Middle Street,
Taunton.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses,

THE BOROUGH OF TAUNTON,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1968. This is drawn up in accordance with the instructions of the Department of Health and Social Security, and follows the lines of previous reports, so that comparisons with the conditions of former years may easily be made. The various sections have been amended as necessary to bring the account of health matters in the Borough up to date, and fresh comment has been made on various subjects, but it has not been thought necessary on this occasion to undertake extensive re-writing of the report.

Mr. Pawson, the Chief Public Health Inspector, contributes a full account of the activities of the Public Health Inspecting Staff who have had a busy and fruitful year of work, and I should like to join with him in expressing appreciation of the work carried out by past and present members of the staff.

I wish also to express appreciation of the valuable help I have received during the year from the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee, from Dr. Thomson, who acts as my deputy when the occasion arises, and from fellow officials of the Council.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

HUGH MORRISON,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF TAUNTON

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1968

GENERAL STATISTICS

Acreage of Borough	...	...	...	...	...	2,581
Population (estimated by Registrar General, mid-year)	...					37,440
Number of inhabited houses and flats (separately assessed) at the end of 1968 (according to the rate books)	...	...				11,850
Rateable value at the end of 1968	...	...	...	...	...	£1,537,294
Estimated product of a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	£6,633

VITAL STATISTICS

It should be pointed out that in the figures which follow, the standardisation of the rate for births and deaths allows for the differing age and sex distribution of the population in different areas, and is obtained by multiplying the crude rate by a comparability factor for the district furnished by the Registrar General. This enables comparison to be made with the figures for the country as a whole, or with those for other districts.

1. Births.

(a) Live Births

				M	F	Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	258	245	503
Illegitimate	...	...	...	21	27	48
Total	...	...	...	279	272	551

Birth Rate per 1,000 population 14.7

Standardised Birth Rate :—

Taunton 15.0

England and Wales 16.9

Percentage illegitimate of total live births 8.7

(b) Still Births

Total	...	...	...	...	...	7
Rate per 1,000 live and still births :—						
Taunton	...	...	...	...	...	12.54
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	...	14.0
Total live and still births	...	...	...	...	...	558

2 Deaths.

(a) Total deaths	...	...	...	...	...	468	
Death rate per 1,000 population	...	...	...	...	...	...	12.5
Standardised Death Rate :—							
Taunton	...	...	...	...	...	...	12.0
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.9
(b) Infant Deaths (deaths under 1 year) :—							
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
Infant Deaths per 1,000 live births :—							
Taunton	...	...	...	...	...	...	23.6
England and Wales	...	...	...	...	...	...	18.0
Legitimate Infant Deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	...	...	...	21.9
Illegitimate Infant Deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	...	...	...	41.6
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 live births)	...	...	...	...	...	...	18.1
Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 live births)	...	...	...	...	...	...	14.5
Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 live and still births)	...	...	...	...	...	...	26.8

Causes of Infant Deaths :—

Cause of Death	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks and under 1 year	Totals under 1 year
Meningitis	1	—	1
Pneumonia	2	—	2
Other diseases of respiratory system	—	1	1
Congenital anomalies	2	1	3
Birth injury, difficult labour, etc.	3	—	3
Other causes of perinatal mortality	2	1	3
Totals	10	3	13

(c) Maternal Mortality							
Total Maternal Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	...	NIL
(d) Deaths from Cancer							
Cancer of the Lung	...	...	...	...	Males	...	13
					Females	...	8
					Total	...	21
Cancer in all other situations	...	...	...	...	Males	...	36
					Females	...	41
					Total	...	77

Number of Deaths from Cancer of Lung—England and Wales—

1964	...	25,371
1965	...	26,399
1966	...	27,025
1967	...	28,250
1968	...	28,826

Comment on Vital Statistics.

The birth rate for Taunton was rather lower than that of England and Wales as a whole. The infant mortality rate was slightly higher, at 23.6 per 1,000 births, than the figure of 18.0 for the whole of England and Wales. These minor statistical variations can easily occur when dealing with a fairly small population without having any great significance. The rate of illegitimate births was 8.7 per cent; rather higher than the previous year but below the level of 1966.

The death rate in Taunton was marginally higher than that of the country as a whole. There were 10 accidental deaths including 7 from motor accidents. The latter figure is more than twice as high as that of the previous year and gives cause for concern.

Figures for lung cancer are still running at a high level and the table above showing figures for England and Wales over a period of 5 years clearly demonstrates the serious problem which this disease presents.

There were 4 deaths from infectious diseases during the year, including 2 from pulmonary tuberculosis.

There have been some changes in the form of the Table of Causes of Death as set out by the Registrar General. Some new causes have been inserted such as asthma and cirrhosis of the liver, but the changes mainly affect the section covering various diseases affecting the heart and blood vessels. These always account for a large number of deaths in any community and the figures for Taunton are no exception. Since the terms used are technical and perhaps not always easily understood by the lay person it may be useful to provide some explanations, though it should be understood that this is very much a simplification of a very complicated subject.

Chronic rheumatic heart disease: this is damage inflicted on the heart by one or more attacks of acute rheumatism, usually occurring in childhood or early adult life. The structures often affected are the heart valves which may be deformed and rendered incapable of carrying out their function. This throws a constant strain on the heart in the effort demanded from it to compensate for the valve deficiency. Ultimately the heart is liable to become enlarged and to fail.

Hypertensive disease: is the condition associated with high blood pressure. Again a long-standing strain is put upon the heart in overcoming increased resistance to its action.

Ischaemic heart disease: nearly always means coronary thrombosis, in which one of the arteries supplying the heart muscle becomes blocked by a clot of blood, and as a result the portion of the heart depending on the affected artery is deprived of its blood supply. There are various degrees of severity with this condition and many cases make a good recovery, but when a massive blockage takes place the heart becomes incapable of performing its function and death ensues.

Other forms of heart disease: a number of widely varying conditions come under this heading, such as inflammation of the membranes within or around the heart, disorders of heart rhythm and so on.

Cerebrovascular disease: usually means the condition referred to in common terms as a stroke.

Other diseases of the circulatory system includes such things as arteriosclerosis, commonly called hardening of the arteries, aneurysm or dilatation of an artery, and embolism or blockage of an artery, usually by a clot of blood.

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S TABLE OF DEATHS

<i>Cause of Death</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Enteritis and other diarrhoeal diseases ...	—	1	1
Tuberculosis of respiratory system ...	1	1	2
Other infective and parasitic diseases ...	—	1	1
Malignant neoplasm—stomach ..	6	6	12
Malignant neoplasm—lung, bronchus ...	13	8	21
Malignant neoplasm—breast ...	—	9	9
Malignant neoplasm—uterus ...	—	3	3
Leukaemia ...	2	1	3
Other malignant neoplasms etc. ...	30	23	53
Benign and unspecified neoplasms ...	1	—	1
Diabetes mellitus ...	2	3	5
Other endocrine etc., diseases ...	—	1	1
Anaemias ...	1	2	3
Meningitis ...	—	2	2
Other diseases of nervous system etc. ...	1	2	3
Chronic rheumatic heart disease ...	2	2	4
Hypertensive disease ...	6	5	11
Ischaemic heart disease ...	58	47	105
Other forms of heart disease ...	11	11	22
Cerebrovascular disease ...	20	38	58
Other diseases of circulatory system ...	13	21	34
Influenza ...	1	1	2
Pneumonia ...	15	24	39
Bronchitis and emphysema ...	14	4	18
Other diseases of respiratory system ...	2	2	4
Peptic ulcer ...	1	—	1
Intestinal obstruction and hernia ...	1	1	2
Cirrhosis of liver ...	1	—	1
Other diseases of digestive system ...	4	6	10
Hyperplasia of prostate ...	3	—	3
Other diseases, genito-urinary system ..	3	1	4
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system ...	—	1	1
Congenital anomalies ...	4	1	5
Birth injury, difficult labour etc. ...	2	1	3
Other causes of perinatal mortality ...	1	2	3
Symptoms and ill-defined conditions ...	1	2	3
Motor vehicle accidents ...	6	1	7
All other accidents ...	3	—	3
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries ...	3	2	5

HEALTH EDUCATION

An account of the health education activities being carried out in the Borough was included in last years report and since these have continued on the same lines during 1968 it is not thought necessary to repeat this.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (excluding Tuberculosis)

There was a heavy epidemic of measles during the year. It is hoped that this may be the last one of such dimensions because of the immunisation of children against this disease which has been going on over the past year. Other common infectious diseases notified were few in number.

Mention should be made of the 10 cases of infective jaundice. This is a virus disease which has only recently become notifiable. It has a long incubation period and it is thus difficult to trace the spread from one case to another. For the most part the disease, although troublesome because it involves a fairly long period of absence from work or school, is not dangerous to life but some cases can be very severe. There is a preventive measure available in the shape of injections of gamma globulin. This procedure has been used in the Taunton area in a number of cases.

Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	589
Dysentery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Whooping cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Infective jaundice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Acute encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Food poisoning	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7

TUBERCULOSIS

The number of new cases discovered during 1968 was rather higher than in recent years. This emphasises the fact that tuberculosis has by no means become an historical problem. However, as a vivid demonstration of the trend over the past generation, a table of the tuberculosis figures of forty years ago for the Borough of Taunton is appended to the statistics for the year 1968. Improved economic conditions, better ideas of hygiene, a more healthy and better nourished population are all factors which have helped to lessen the effects of tuberculosis, but there can be little doubt that the greatest benefit of all in this direction has resulted from the discovery of anti-biotics.

			Pulmonary	Non-pulmonary
1968	{ Cases on the Borough Register on 31.12.68		59	11
	{ New cases notified during 1968	... ..	9	1
	{ Deaths during 1968	... ..	2	—
1928	{ Cases on the Borough Register on 31.12.28		362	49
	{ New cases notified in 1928	... ..	47	3
	{ Deaths during 1928	... ..	19	3

IMMUNISATION

The protection against various infectious diseases which can now be given by immunisation is one of the most important of public health benefits, and has contributed largely to the decline in prevalence of these conditions and to the very great reduction in the number of deaths which they now cause.

Immunisation is carried out either by the family doctor or at child welfare clinics and schools by doctors from the Health Department. The whole of the recording side of the procedure has now been transferred to the County Council computer, and for this purpose children are grouped according to the family doctor on whose medical list they are. This will have the result that very few children will in future have their immunisation carried out by Public Health medical staff. It is logical and desirable that preventive medical procedures should to an increasing extent be among those benefits to the population available through the family doctor under the National Health Service. However, until the computer arrangements are in full working order, it will no longer be possible to give figures of the number of children immunised at various ages in any particular local authority area, and thus the percentage rate of immunisation against different diseases cannot be stated. It is desirable to know these figures, and we are assured that they will become available at some later time. Meantime it has been thought worth while to insert in this Report an up-to-date schedule of the immunisation programme recommended for children, together with brief notes on the diseases against which the procedure is aimed.

Age	Prophylactic	Interval
During the first year of life	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough and oral Polio vaccine. (First dose)	Preferably after an interval of 6-8 weeks
	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough and oral Polio vaccine. (Second dose)	Preferably after an interval of 6 months
	Diphtheria/Tetanus/Whooping Cough and oral Polio vaccine. (Third dose)	
During the second year of life	Measles vaccination	After an interval of not less than 3-4 weeks.
	Smallpox vaccination	After an interval of not less than 3-4 weeks.
At 5 years of age or school entry	Diph/Tet and oral Polio vaccine or Diph / Tet / Polio vaccine Smallpox revaccination	
Between 10 and 13 years of age.	B.C.G. vaccine	
At 15-19 years of age or on leaving school	Polio vaccine (Oral or inactivated) Tetanus toxoid Smallpox revaccination	

Diphtheria.

Immunisation against diphtheria was the first mass campaign of protection against an infectious disease carried out in this country, apart from vaccination against smallpox which has never been applied to such a wide extent. The result is that, whereas there used to be thousands of deaths from diphtheria each year in England and Wales, the mortality is now almost down to vanishing point. It is necessary for the percentage of protected children in the community to be kept high in order to avoid the recurrence of outbreaks.

Whooping Cough.

This is now probably the most generally disabling of the common infectious diseases affecting young children. There are risks to life, especially in infants, and lung complications can be severe and prolonged. Immunisation is preventive in a good proportion of cases and in the remainder modifies the disease to produce a mild attack.

Tetanus.

This is an uncommon infection in this country but important because of its very severe character and the high rate of mortality in those affected. It is much commoner in some of the less developed parts of the world, and even in Europe at least 26,000 have died from this cause in the past ten years. Immunisation gives the practical certainty of complete protection.

Poliomyelitis.

It is hardly necessary to stress the misery which can result from this disease in view of the widespread epidemics which have occurred in this country within recent memory. Many of the sufferers die, and others are left with a lifetime of disablement. Immunisation is now simple with the use of vaccine given by mouth and has been largely responsible for the virtual elimination of poliomyelitis as a serious epidemic risk in this country at the present time. Here again it is essential that a high proportion of children continue to be immunised in order to avoid the danger of further outbreaks.

Smallpox.

Smallpox is one of the most deadly of all infectious diseases. Its incidence in this country has been confined in latter years to scattered outbreaks, but the dangers of large-scale epidemics are increasing owing to the ease and rapidity of air transport from countries where the disease is still endemic. Vaccination gives excellent protection, and is best done initially in the second year of life.

Tuberculosis.

One of the most dramatic improvements in the state of the national health has been the enormous fall over the period since the last war in the prevalence of tuberculosis and in the number of deaths which it causes. There are many factors responsible for this gratifying development, and one of them undoubtedly is the beneficial effect of the widespread campaign of immunisation with B.C.G. which has been carried out. The required injection is given at about the age of twelve after preliminary skin testing to determine which children are susceptible to an attack of the disease.

Yellow Fever.

This disease does not occur in Great Britain but it is still prevalent and dangerous in various parts of the world. Immunisation is very effective and is required of those proposing to travel to affected areas. The Taunton Health Department is one of the centres in the South West where this procedure is carried out.

PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Administered in Taunton Municipal Borough by the Somerset
County Council

Health Visiting Service

There were 7 Health Visitors engaged on work in the Borough during 1968, supervised generally by the Medical Officer of Health for Taunton in the capacity of Area Medical Officer of Health, and their activities included:—

Home Visiting of Children.

Number of cases dealt with :—

Children under one year ...	...	556
Children aged one to five years ...		1,940

Ante-natal Visits.

During the year the scheme was continued whereby expectant mothers booked for hospital confinement were visited and advised by the Health Visitors in co-operation with the Domiciliary Midwives.

School Medical Inspection.

Each Health Visitor visits the schools in her area to assist the School Medical Officer with routine medical inspection and immunisation. When necessary she carries out hygiene surveys in the schools. Every child now has an annual eye test.

School Children.

Visits are paid to children at the request of the doctor following on the work of the school medical inspections.

Old People.

Special visits are paid to old people, as requested by doctors, medical social workers, welfare officers, etc.

Other Visits.

Amongst other matters referred to and dealt with by the Health Visitors are problems of handicapped persons, infectious diseases, difficult school conditions, etc. Visiting of tuberculosis cases and other chest conditions is carried out by a Health Visitor specialising in this work. The work of the Health Visitor in the Mental Health field has increased considerably since the coming into operation of the Mental Health Act, 1959.

Child Welfare Centre.

Numbers of individual children who attended were as follows:—

558 attended Tower Lane on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

209 attended All Saint's Church Hall, Halcon, on Wednesday afternoons.

397 attended St. Peter's Church Hall, Priorswood, on Friday afternoons.

210 attended St. Michael's Church Hall, Galmington, on Monday afternoons.

Total attendances of children under 5 years of age were 7,035 which was a decrease of 175 from the previous year. The decrease in clinic attendances is due to the fact that a number of the local doctors are now offering their own child welfare facilities at their practice premises.

Liaison with Family Doctors.

The scheme of Health Visitor and District Nurse attachment to general practices in the Borough, as outlined in the report for 1965, was brought into full operation in 1966, and is working very well indeed.

Ante-natal Clinics.

The blood test clinic for ante-natal patients has been discontinued. Facilities for this service are now available at the Family Doctors' surgeries and at Musgrove Park Hospital.

The Ante-natal Clinic is staffed fortnightly on Mondays by Domiciliary Midwives who help and advise expectant mothers booked for Wellington Maternity Home or for domiciliary confinement.

Mothercraft Classes.

These are held weekly in the Health Centre with a short break between each series of seven talks.

Classes for relaxation exercises and talks by a Doctor, a Health Visitor or a Midwife are given each time.

There is an average attendance of 30—36; slightly higher during the winter months. It is necessary to divide the classes into two groups, the talks being given to each group in turn while the other group is having relaxation exercises. During 1968, 195 women attended and the total number of attendances was 823.

Domiciliary Midwifery and Nursing.

32,518 midwifery and nursing visits were made to patients in their own homes during the year by domiciliary midwives and nurses. These included a large number of special visits to old people. The demands of domiciliary nursing are increasing because of the shortage of hospital beds and the more intensive follow-up visiting demanded by the practice of earlier discharge from hospital.

Premature Baby Service.

In addition to the arrangements for the care of full-term babies a special service is provided for premature infants. If there is a risk that a child will be born after less than 37 or 38 weeks gestation, arrangements are made for the admission of the expectant mother to Musgrove Park Hospital where special facilities are available and special equipment is provided where necessary.

Small or premature babies unsuitable for nursing at home are admitted to that Unit from the district and a special Oxygenaire incubator is sent by ambulance to collect them.

If premature babies born at home can be nursed there, the district midwife can obtain special equipment for this and advice, if required, from the Area Nursing Officer who follows up all premature births.

During 1968, 39 premature infants were born in hospitals of whom 8 died; 1 was born at home.

Home Help Service

During 1968, 306 Borough residents received assistance from the Home Help Service as against 350 in 1967.

Help was sent for the following reasons :—

Maternity	...	...	...	10
Post and Pre-natal	...	...	...	1
Old Age	...	...	...	231
General illness	...	...	...	15
Chronic illness	...	...	...	33
Post operative	...	...	...	6
Care of children	...	...	...	6
Mental illness	...	...	...	2
Accidents	...	...	...	2

Of these, 208 remained on the books at 31st December, 1968 against 193 in December, 1967. 154 had received continuous help for over twelve months against 136 in 1967. The numbers receiving help showed some decrease from the previous year although the number of long term recipients continues to increase. It is being found that the recruitment of Home Helps is a very serious problem and one which seems to be getting worse year by year.

Distribution of Welfare Foods.

National dried milk, orange juice and cod liver oil for infants and vitamin tablets for expectant mothers, are distributed at the Welfare Centres.

Certain proprietary brands of dried milk, babies' cereals and vitamin C syrups are sold at approximately cost price to mothers and children who attend the Clinics.

Dental Clinic, Tower Lane, Taunton.

The treatment given to school children during the year ended 31st December, 1968 was as follows:—

Number In-spected	Number requiring Treatment	Number treated	Extractions		Fillings		Other Treatment (Dentures, Crowns Orthodontics, X-rays, etc.)
			Decid.	Perm.	Decid.	Perm.	
8,296	4,113	2,867	1,853	614	2,638	3,674	410

The treatment given to expectant and nursing mothers and to pre-school children is shown below :—

	Adults	Pre-school children
1. Number of cases inspected ...	16	126
2. Number found to require treatment	14	91
3. Number of cases treated	24	112
4. Number of attendances	74	363
5. Dentures provided	9	—

The above figures include a number of cases attending the Clinic from the areas surrounding Taunton Borough.

Day Nursery

The Day Nursery at Holway Road which was opened in the Summer of 1966 is an immense improvement on the sub-standard accommodation which had to be occupied for so many years. The new building gained an architectural award during the year. It will be seen to full advantage when the adjoining school meals kitchen building which is no longer in use is demolished. Pressure of demand for places in the nursery remained very high throughout the year and there was some prospect that steps might be possible to increase the number of places by an extension of the building.

There were many applications for registration under the Child Minders Regulations and as a result substantially more places were available for toddlers in play-groups. If some of the ladies who are providing this excellent service could find it possible to offer a whole-day session rather than mornings only, so that mothers might be able to take up regular work, there would undoubtedly be a great demand in the town for this facility.

MEALS ON WHEELS

The Women's Voluntary Service continued their excellent scheme of providing cooked meals to old people in the Borough. Throughout the year a total of 8,953 meals were delivered to recipients in the Borough, the average number of recipients then being 85-90. This number has recently risen to 100 old people receiving 2 meals each week.

Endeavours have been made to find volunteer helpers and an additional source of supply of meals so that a third meal could be made available each week, but this has so far not proved possible. It is felt that a third meal would be of enormous benefit to those who depend on this service and great efforts are being made to achieve the aim of providing this extra weekly meal.

WELFARE SERVICES BY VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

The British Red Cross Society maintain a Loan Department in the Borough which does most useful work in the distribution of aids to home nursing, which are hired out to patients who can benefit from this help. The Society would welcome volunteers to assist with this work.

The St. John Ambulance Brigade run car outings for disabled persons throughout the summer months which enable patients who may seldom leave the confines of their own homes to spend pleasant and sociable afternoons in various beauty spots in the countryside surrounding Taunton. Volunteer car drivers would also be welcome to help with this activity.

MASS RADIOGRAPHY

The fortnightly service was operated throughout the year, first at the Tangier Car Park, and later at the Wood Street Car Park.

The reports on examinations were as follows :—

	Male	Female	Total
Total number examined	618	771	1,389
Abnormalities detected.			
Healed pulmonary tuberculosis ...	4	2	6
Sarcoidosis	2	—	2
Inflammatory	1	2	3
Influenza and Pneumonitis ...	1	1	2
Prominent Broncho Vascular Marking	1	—	1
Enlarged heart	1	—	1
Bronchitis	3	1	4
Atelectasis	1	—	1
Hypertensive heart	1	2	3
Pneumoconiosis	2	—	2
Pulmonary fibrosis	1	—	1
Pleural thickening	2	—	2
Pneumonic consolidation ...	1	—	1
Loeffler's syndrome	—	1	1
Abnormality of diaphragm ...	1	—	1
Goitre	1	—	1
Cardiac lesion acquired	2	—	2
<hr/>			
General practitioner cases included 166.	25	9	34
<hr/>			

PERSONS IN NEED OF CARE AND ATTENTION

An account has been given in a previous report of the sort of circumstances which lead to the application for compulsory powers of removal of a person from their home to a hospital or institution and this need not be repeated, except that one would wish to emphasise that every other means of dealing with these difficult cases is tried before making use of the legal procedure as a last resort. It was not necessary to invoke this procedure during the year.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

The main Ambulance Station and Control for South-West Somerset is situated at Parkfield Drive, Taunton. The Ambulance Station serves a very wide area and at 31st December, 1968, the establishment of vehicles and staff was as follows :—

Vehicles—8 Ambulances
6 Sitting-case Ambulances
1 Car

Staff— 5 Sub-Officers
25 Driver/attendants

All vehicles are equipped with two-way radio communication.

		Patients carried	Mileage run— during 1968
Ambulances	...	13,505	137,722
Sitting-case Ambulances	...	23,443	194,305
Cars	... ..	2,248	36,644

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

I am indebted to the Borough Engineer for the facts mentioned in this paragraph and also for those in the following section on Refuse Disposal.

During 1968 work was completed on the Staplegrove Road/ Bindon Road surface water sewer which takes the surface water from the road gullies in Bindon Road, part of Staplegrove Road and part of Greenway Road thus relieving the combined sewer in Staplegrove Road.

There is a contract at present in progress at the sewage disposal works for the duplication of certain feed pipes for the sedimentation tanks and bacteria beds. This will correct an anomaly in the total flow given full treatment.

Proposals for the immediate future are for re-sewering of the lower Staplegrove Road area and provision of a second digestion tank at the sewage disposal works.

REFUSE COLLECTION

Approximately three thousand cubic yards of refuse are collected weekly by the Engineer's cleansing department. Road sweepings alone account for about thirty cubic yards a week. Disposal is done by controlled tipping. The pilot paper sack collection scheme launched in 1965 continued to operate satisfactorily in a small area of the town. It was hoped to extend this facility to cover the whole area at a later date but national restrictions on capital expenditure have frustrated this project.

WATER SUPPLY

I should like to thank the Chief Engineer to the West Somerset Water Board, Mr. J. Moat, for the details of water supplies in this district which follow :—

The Taunton Division of the Board is responsible for supplies to the Rural District of Taunton and the Urban and Rural Districts of Wellington in addition to those for the Borough of Taunton itself. It has not been found practicable to produce figures and other details for the town alone, so that the other areas mentioned as coming under the Taunton Division are included in the present account.

Most of the water now comes from the Clatworthy Reservoir in the Brendon Hills, but some is still obtained from gathering grounds on the Blackdowns and from the River Otter. All catchment areas are inspected and supervised and the Board's chemist takes regular samples for chemical and bacteriological examination. The water is filtered and chlorinated before distribution. The quality is good, as is shown by the following results of bacteriological sampling of treated water :—

Satisfactory
239

Unsatisfactory
2

Samples recorded as unsatisfactory are immediately investigated and any necessary action taken to set the trouble to rights.

HOUSING

I am indebted to the Borough Architect and the Housing Manager for the following information :—

In the period between the end of the last war and the end of 1968, the number of houses erected by the Borough, acting as Local Authority, was 3,211 and in the same period the number provided by private enterprise was 1,256.

Of the post-war houses built by the Council the majority were three-bedroomed houses, although a substantial number of two-bed-roomed houses, two-bedroomed flats, one bed-roomed flats and two-bedroomed temporary bungalows had also been erected.

During the year 1968, 106 houses and flats were completed for the Council and 9 were in course of erection. In the same period, 88 houses were built by private enterprise and 90 private houses were in course of erection. 27 old peoples' dwellings were completed during the period and 46 were in course of erection.

One Clearance Area involving 6 houses was declared, and a number of houses were dealt with individually. Details of these are given in the Chief Public Health Inspector's section of the report.

The number of applicants on the waiting list for Council houses at the end of the year was 450, which shows a decrease from the figure of 468 at the end of the previous year. The number of applications for Old Peoples' Dwellings was 116.

Improvements to Concrete Houses at Lambrook Estate.

Modernisation and improvement was carried out during the year on pre-war concrete houses on the Lambrook Estate. The work involves the complete replanning of the houses to form two and three bedroom accommodation, the plastering of walls and complete re-decoration and the provision of a new bathroom and hot water system in each house. The cost, in each case, amounts to just over £1,000. There were numerous complaints of dampness in these houses and the Council decided to put in hand an investigation into this matter before proceeding with further modernisation.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

Discretionary.

Number of applications and houses dealt with during the year 1968:—

			Applications	No. of dwellings
Received	...	...	19	19
Approved	...	...	16	16

Number of applications approved in respect of owner/occupiers during the year—12.

Average cost per dwelling approved during year—£510.

Amount of grant payable by Local Authority—£2,333.

Standard.

1.	Number of applications (a) Received	...	...	49
	(b) Approved	...	...	42
2.	Number of houses where Standard Amenities have been provided	...	...	32
	Number of applications approved in respect of owner/occupiers during the year	...	...	37

STAFF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Medical examinations carried out by the Department in connection with new appointments to the Council's staff, and in connection with the Superannuation Scheme and the Workmen's Sick-ness Benefit Regulations, were as follows :—

	Department	Male	Female	Total
Engineer	22	—	22
Housing	1	4	5
Library	2	4	6
Town Clerk	3	—	3
Treasurer	4	4	8
Health	—	1	1
		32	13	45

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR
for the year 1968

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with pleasure that I present my report for 1968. In June Mrs. Hayes, our Technical Assistant, retired for personal reasons, and I would not like the opportunity to pass without putting on record my sincere appreciation of her work which she always carried out very meticulously and in a most cheerful manner. Miss I. M. Reed, of the Borough Treasurer's Department, was appointed to fill the vacancy. Mr. S. A. Turner, our pupil, is to be congratulated both on passing his final qualifying examination, and on obtaining an appointment with the London Borough of Merton and Morden. We wish both these members of the staff all the very best for the future.

The routine inspection of all the multifarious types of premises has continued much as before. It is satisfying to be able to report that nearly all the Houses in Multiple Occupation have been inspected, and are now receiving visits as and when necessary. All the hair dressing establishments were the subject of a detailed inspection as regards to the Bye-laws besides the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act.

Mr. L. G. Hopes and Mr. G. W. Mathews have continued to be mainly responsible for health education and lectures. It was a great disappointment that we were unable to run the course sponsored by the Royal Society of Health for the Certificate in Hygiene of Food Retailing and Catering, due to a lack of response from would-be students. Mr. Mathews attended a short course on Noise; and it is hoped to send other Public Health Inspectors as and when courses are run.

On 11th June as a result of nearly 4ins. rainfall in 24 hours, widespread moderate flooding occurred in several areas of the Borough, and the Public Health Inspectors visited all affected houses to advise generally on precautionary measures etc. and arrange for help as and when necessary. Many food premises were visited and food stocks inspected to assess the degree of contamination, and where necessary arrange for the disposal of condemned items.

In conclusion I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Chairman and Members of the Health and Welfare Committee, the Medical Officer of Health, and all members of the staff for their unfailing co-operation and kindness at all times.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

G. M. PAWSON,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS

Housing and General Sanitary Work.

Houses inspected under the Public Health Acts	239
Houses inspected under the Housing and Rent Acts	459
Houses inspected under the Taunton Corporation Act	53
Re-inspections under the above Acts	823
Houses in Multiple Occupation inspected and re-visited	444
Miscellaneous housing inspections	132
Smoke observations, etc.	55
Moveable dwellings	38
Dealers in old metal	3
Infectious diseases and disinfections	68
Drainage, in connection with	509
Factories	973
Hairdressers	78
Infested or Verminous premises	115
Interviews	762
Meteorological Readings	365
Noise, in connection with	16
Offensive trades	16
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises—Inspections	131
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises—Re-visits	617
Outworkers	0
Pet Shops	31
Cinemas and Places of Entertainment	4
Refuse collection and disposal	19
Rag Flock premises	9
Rodent Control (excluding visits by Rodent Operator)	188
Schools	18
Shops (Shops Acts)	7
Swimming Baths	42
Water Sampling	177
Miscellaneous visits	515
Total	6,906

Complaints.

During the year 746 complaints were received at the Health Department having reference to the following matters :—

Housing conditions	47
Drainage	109
Rats or mice	208
Unsound food	177
Miscellaneous	124
Insect Pests	81

All these complaints were investigated and appropriate action taken.

Housing Repairs.

During the year the following work was carried out :—

Drains cleared	83
Drains or sewers renewed or repaired	20
New drains provided	49
Sewers cleared	41
Cesspools emptied	—
Inspection chambers built	20
Inspection chambers repaired	3
Inspection chambers—new covers provided	5
New gullies provided	6
Yard surfaces renewed	6
Eaves gutters renewed	6
Eaves gutters repaired	3
Rainwater pipes renewed	15
Waterclosets provided	38
W.C. pans renewed	25
W.C. flushing cisterns provided	66
Flush pipes repaired	4
W.C.'s—new seats provided	4
Roofs renewed	3
Roofs repaired	24
Chimney stacks rebuilt	3
Chimney stacks repaired	4
Chimneys—flashings renewed	2
Walls rebuilt	2
External walls repaired	29
Ceilings renewed or repaired	17
Floors renewed	10
Floors repaired	13
Skirting boards renewed	60
Waste pipe renewed	4
Sub-floor ventilation improved	1
Wall rendering renewed or repaired	59
Dampness abated	49
Fireplaces renewed or repaired	8
Doors renewed or repaired	26
New windows provided	28
Windows repaired	17
Window sills renewed	4
Windows—sash cords provided	3
Natural lighting improved	13
Ventilation improved	20
Water service pipes renewed	2
Water heating systems installed	57
Bath provided	61
Wash-hand basins provided	56
Kitchen sinks provided	47
Staircases repaired	3
Ventilated food cupboards provided	37
Electric services repaired	2
Hand rails repaired or renewed	—
Boundary fences renewed	2
Total	1,050

The repair of unfit houses has always been considered to be one of the more important and essential duties of the Department, and complaints concerning housing defects are always given a high degree of priority. Generally the work has been carried out under powers conferred by the Public Health Acts, and seldom under the Housing Acts.

During the year 239 inspections were made under the Public Health Acts, besides many more further visits. 509 visits were also made in connection with drainage complaints and resulted in 124 sewers and drains being cleared.

The total number of items which received attention was 1,050, which shows an increase of about 25% on the previous year.

HOUSING ACTS

One Clearance Area comprising six houses in Tancred Street was confirmed: whilst five other adjacent houses were excluded by the Council after being represented by the Medical Officer of Health.

No demolitions took place; but several premises were the subject of Closing Orders. On the credit side several Closing Orders were determined after completion of extensive works of repair.

During the year a start was made on a comprehensive house-to-house survey of two areas in the borough comprising a total of about a thousand premises. The main purpose of this survey besides gaining a precise assessment of the condition of the premises, was to effect repairs where necessary and to secure improvements with regard to amenities whenever practicable. The work of inspection will take some considerable time, as the man-hours available for this are limited: but it is hoped to give a full report by the end of next year.

Over a thousand visits and inspections were made in connection with the Housing Acts.

Fifty-three visits were also made to premises in connection with the Taunton Corporation Act, which deals with the question of obstruction to light and air to existing premises from new constructions.

In most instances on the spot consultations between interested parties have achieved happy compromises.

Houses closed under Section 17	...	...	...	...	17
Houses where Closing Orders have been determined	...				1
Houses where Closing Orders have been determined in part					1
Houses where Undertaking not to let has been determined	...				1
Parts of houses where Closing Orders have been determined					2

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

With the inception of the large scale house-to-house survey of two areas in the borough, the work in connection with houses in multiple occupation has been almost entirely confined to revisiting the large number of such premises which were the subject of an initial inspection during the previous years. This was to ensure that the carrying out of the essential repairs and provision of amenities had received attention.

A total of 185 houses involving over six hundred separate lettings have now been inspected, and these figures probably account for all the known houses in multiple occupation in the borough. Any others will of course be dealt with as and when they become known: but it must be appreciated that it is not always easy to locate this type of letting especially when it occurs in the smaller terrace type of house.

For the most part the owners have co-operated and complied with informal notices; and only rarely has it been necessary to resort to statutory action to enforce repairs or to provide the required amenities. One house was the subject of a Management Order: and four others received Direction Notices to reduce the total number of occupants.

444 visits were made in connection with the enforcement of notices and as a consequence the following matters received attention :—

Summary of work carried out—Houses in Multiple Occupation

External.

Chimney stacks repaired	...	...	...	2
Roofs repaired	...	...	...	7
Roofs renewed	...	...	...	1
Eaves gutters repaired or renewed	...	...	...	2
Rainwater pipes repaired or renewed	...	...	...	1
Walls repaired	...	...	...	8
Choked drains cleared	...	...	...	2
Yard paving repaired or renewed	...	...	...	1
Extra dustbins provided	...	...	...	1
Water closets repaired or renewed	...	...	...	6
Drainage repaired or renewed	...	...	...	8

Internal.

Walls repaired or renewed	...	...	...	19
Ceilings repaired or renewed	...	...	...	10
Floors repaired	...	...	...	5
Doors repaired or renewed	...	...	...	2
Windows repaired or renewed	...	...	...	20
Staircase repaired	...	...	...	7
Rooms redecorated	...	...	...	5
Staircases redecorated	...	...	...	2
Dampness abated	...	...	...	19
Lighting and/or ventilation improved	...	...	...	25
Larders repaired or renewed	...	...	...	4
New ventilated larders provided	...	...	...	10
Refrigerators provided	...	...	...	4
Electric fittings repaired or provided	...	...	...	2
Heating installations provided/repared	...	...	...	3
Hot water supply repaired or renewed	...	...	...	4
Hot water supply provided	...	...	...	4
Cold water supply repaired or renewed	...	...	...	4
Wash-hand basin renewed/repared	...	...	...	5
Sink and/or draining board renewed	...	...	...	7
Cooking facilities provided or improved	...	...	...	4
Additional W.C.'s provided	...	...	...	2
Additional bathrooms provided	...	...	...	5
Baths renewed or repaired	...	...	...	3

Other Items.

Units of accommodation closed as unfit for habitation	...	...	...	—
Units of accommodation ceased to be used for multi-occupation	...	...	...	1
Number of cases of overcrowding reduced	...	...	...	3
Total				218

RENT ACT, 1957

No applications for Certificates of Disrepair were received.

Public Health Act, 1936—Section 24.

During the year 45 sewers were found to be choked, and were cleared by the Corporation. Sewers dealt with under this section are those that were maintainable by owners of property under previous Public Health Acts.

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

During the year 4 proposals for new boiler installations were considered and where necessary the chimney height was modified in accordance with our recommendations. It is encouraging to record that architects and others concerned with new buildings are now more prepared to consult the department regarding chimney height and new installations.

NOISE

During the year sixteen visits were made in connection with complaints as to noise, and in each instance advice was given as to the best means of abating or reducing the nuisance.

In July Mr. Mathews attended a two day course on noise measurement and sound-proofing which was most instructive.

The seriousness of industrial noise and its effects on hearing is now becoming more fully appreciated, and the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council has brought out a special report on the subject and this clearly indicates their deep concern in this hitherto somewhat neglected sphere of industrial injury. Their summary and recommendations are—

“The report of the investigations shows more clearly than ever before the relationship between noise and its effect on hearing. This relationship has been expressed and it is now possible to estimate the hearing loss that can be expected to result from exposure to a known noise level for a given length of time. This represents a considerable and an essential step forward. Because deafness itself is such an extremely common condition among the population as a whole and can have many forms and origins, the question of its

prescription as an industrial disease is necessarily one of immense complexity. But, the stage has been reached where the degree of deafness that can be attributed to industrial noise has been satisfactorily identified in statistical terms, applicable in a general sense, and our further enquiries suggest that it may well be possible to identify and measure this element of deafness in a majority of individual cases—a question which must be solved if prescription is to become a reality. We are conscious that there are most difficult problems still to be considered, about which we must satisfy ourselves, both in the areas already mentioned, and, for example, in the field of administration. Nevertheless, in our view work on this subject is at the point where we feel justified in stating that a *prima facie* case has now been established for recommending that a formal reference of the question of prescription should be sought from the Secretary of State for Social Services.”

RODENT CONTROL

Our rodent operator—Mr. L. Wood—has maintained the tight control of the rodent population in the borough. The system of surveying different areas at regular intervals, combined with the regular treatment of the sewers has paid good dividends: and any fresh areas of infestation are quickly detected and dealt with. More and more business premises are availing themselves of the services of the Department not only for the control of rats and mice, but also for all types of insect pests. A service is maintained for the destruction of wasps’ nests; and this appears to be greatly appreciated by all sections of the community. It is interesting to note that only 40 such nests were dealt with as compared with 108 in the previous year.

The following work was carried out during the year ;—

Treatments at private dwellings	...	...	237
Visits involved	...	...	589
Treatments at business premises	...	...	218
Visits involved	...	...	490
Treatments at Council premises	...	...	80
Visits involved	...	...	219
Survey visits	...	...	58
Wasps’ nests destroyed	...	...	40
Other vermin, etc.	...	...	36
Treatments of sewers	...	...	194
Visits involved	...	...	581
Drain tests	...	...	25

Disinfection.

Disinfection of premises and bedding after the occurrence of disease, or after death, was carried out in 6 premises.

**SPECIAL CLASSES OF PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS
SUBJECT TO CONTROL BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

Public Health Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades—

Tanners	...	...	...	...	...	1
Hide and Skin Depots	...	...	...	...	...	1
Rag and Bone Merchants		...	...	...	...	2

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960.

There are two residential sites in the borough with a total number of 33 vans. Both these sites and the three individual vans have been conducted in a satisfactory manner during the year.

Thirty-eight inspections and visits were carried out, including some with the County Fire Prevention Officer who made certain recommendations with regards to fire prevention and fire fighting equipment.

The Rag, Flock and Other Materials Act, 1951.

Registered premises	3
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These premises are subject to regular inspection, and during the year one sample of rag flock was analysed and found to be of the required standard.

Scrap Metal Dealers Act, 1964.

This Act came into force on 1st April and replaced Section 86 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1861.

Under this Act Local Authorities are required to maintain registers of persons carrying on business in their area as scrap metal merchants. Registration to be renewed every three years. Dealers are also required to keep records of their transactions: and are forbidden to acquire scrap metal from a person apparently under the age of 16 years.

Number of Dealers registered under this Act	...	18
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Public Health Act, 1936—Section 107 (3).

This Section provides for the consent of Local Authority to authorise the carrying on of "Offensive Trades" in their district. In Taunton this is confined to two old-established firms who are Rag and Bone Dealers. Both businesses are well conducted, and have not given any grounds for complaint.

Pet Animals Act, 1951.

Licences to keep pet shops ... 6.

During the year two shops opened up and three closed down. All the businesses were conducted in a satisfactory manner during the year, and visits were made to such premises.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1961.

The Oil Burners (Standards) Act, 1960.

The Oil Heaters Regulations, 1962.

No action was found to be necessary during the year.

HAIRDRESSING ESTABLISHMENTS

These premises which total 36 establishments for ladies and 18 for men are subject to the Bye-laws with respect to Hairdressers and Barbers made in 1964 and in most instances to the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1964 as well. The Bye-laws are designed to secure proper hygienic conditions as regards the premises in which the business takes place, the instruments and equipment used therein, and the persons actually engaged in the business.

A comprehensive inspection of all 54 premises was carried out involving a total of 109 visits. As a result 220 contraventions were found, and rectified after informal notices had been served.

Details are as follows—

		Contraventions		Notices served	
		Bye-laws	Offices, Shops etc. Act	Bye-laws	Offices, Shops etc. Act
Ladies	...	17	176	11	35
Males	...	7	20	5	5
Total	...	24	196	16	40

Sampling of Swimming Bath Water.

During the year 235 samples of the water at the St. James Street Baths from the inlet and outlet ends were tested for both residual and total chlorine besides Ph values. It is interesting and encouraging to note that the average Ph value has risen from 7.01 in the previous year to 7.45: and this is no doubt due to the change from marginal to break-point chlorination. This is a considerable achievement when one realizes that the purification plant has had even heavier loads placed upon it with the raising of the water level in the baths to the lip of the scum trough; so that the surface-borne impurities are no longer drained off.

FOOD INSPECTION

Visits in connection with the inspection and supervision of foods and food premises; and the sampling of food for bacteriological examination :—

Bakers and Confectioners	...	...	...	121
Butchers and Fishmongers	...	...	...	173
Dairies and Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	31
Food Preparation Premises	...	...	...	118
Grocers and Greengrocers	...	...	...	257
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	125
Market Stalls and Mobile Shops etc.	...	...	...	53
Restaurants, Cafes and Canteens	...	...	...	226
Sampling for various foodstuffs	...	...	...	348
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	1,046
Wholesale Meat Depots	...	...	...	116
Total	...	...	...	2,614

During the year 2,771 inspections and visits were made to all types of food premises, and this represents about 30% of the total of all visits made by the Public Health Inspectors during the year, reflecting quite fairly the time and attention that this important facet of environmental health practice demands and receives. With the constantly changing staff of most of the food businesses, it is a matter which allows of no relaxation if high standards are to be maintained with regard to the condition of the various premises and their associated equipment, the handling of foodstuffs and cleaning techniques. About one third of all such visits were in connection with meat inspection at slaughterhouses. The remainder were for the most part concerned with the actual inspection of the premises under the Food Hygiene Regulations, the inspection of food to ascertain its fitness for human consumption, or the taking of foodstuffs for bacteriological examination (full details of such samples appear elsewhere in this report).

As a matter of routine consultations take place between the Public Health Inspectors and architects, builders and representatives of the food trades before any new premises are commissioned or old ones made the subject of works of major reconstruction. In this way compliance with the relevant regulations etc. is achieved without friction, or undue time wasting. During the year thirteen new premises were opened or subjected to major reconstruction.

From the summary which follows this paragraph, it will be seen that 684 items received attention, which is an increase of 50% on the previous year's figures. Nearly half the work concerned either catering establishments or licensed premises, and it is significant to note that after thirteen years when the Food Hygiene Regulations came into being that the provision of sinks, wash-hand basins, W.C. pans, urinals and hot water supply has now been virtually completed, and that the majority of items now are concerned with cleaning, redecoration, repairs and replacements of worn-out equipment and utensils.

Details are as follows :—

Summary of Works carried out at all premises in 1968

	Butchers & Fish- mongers	Bakers and Dairies, etc.	Grocers and Greengrocers	Catering Establish- ments	Licensed Premises	Total
Works of Major Reconstruction ...	1	1	6	3	2	13
Food Rooms						
Walls renewed or repaired ...	24	8	7	3	16	58
Walls redecorated ...	27	17	1	49	40	134
Ceilings renewed or repaired ...	6	2	—	9	4	21
Ceilings redecorated ...	9	7	4	27	21	68
Floors repaired or renewed ...	3	2	3	13	7	28
Improvement of lighting ...	8	2	1	9	4	24
Improvement of ventilation ...	2	2	2	4	2	12
Renewed or repaired drainage ...	1	—	4	2	1	8
Cleansing of premises ...	11	—	11	8	—	30
Doors and windows repaired ..	7	—	2	6	—	15
Equipment, etc.						
New sinks provided ...	1	2	—	7	3	13
Hot water supply provided ...	—	—	—	1	—	1
New draining boards provided ...	—	—	—	5	2	7
Preparation tables, etc. retopped ...	5	10	3	19	1	38
New equipment, etc. provided ...	15	—	—	5	—	20
Dustbins provided ...	12	2	6	6	1	27
Means of protection of food pro- vided ...	3	9	1	2	—	15
Refrigerators provided ...	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Accommodation						
New W.C.'s or urinals installed ...	2	—	—	6	1	9
New flushing cisterns provided ...	—	—	—	2	—	2
Sanitary accommodation repaired...	7	2	—	3	7	19
Sanitary accommodation redecor- ated ...	3	—	—	4	12	19
Sanitary Notices fixed ...	4	4	3	6	3	20
Toilet Accommodation						
Wash-hand basins provided ...	1	1	—	1	3	6
Hot water supply provided ...	3	—	1	3	2	9
Toilet requisites provided ...	2	3	8	13	5	31
Provision of lockers ...	3	—	2	4	1	10
Miscellaneous						
Protective clothing provided ...	1	2	—	3	—	6
Treatments for infestations ...	—	5	—	3	—	8
Provision of first-aid materials ...	6	3	4	7	6	26
Totals ...	166	83	63	230	142	684

SPECIAL TYPES OF PREMISES SUBJECT TO REGISTRATION

Milk Supply.

There are 8 registered Dairies and 43 Distributors of Milk operating within the Borough. The County Council have wide responsibilities in this field and send us monthly reports of all milk samples taken in the Borough.

Ice Cream.

There were 9 new registrations under the Food and Drugs Act, and the total number of registrations is as follows :—

Manufacture and Sale	...	...	...	...	3
Storage and Sale	...	...	...	...	119

Food Preparation Premises.

Under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 all premises where sausages or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food intended for sale are prepared or manufactured must be registered by the local authority. Such premises mainly comprise of butchers, fried fish and chip shops and bakehouses where meat pies, pasties or faggots are manufactured or cooked.

During the year there have been two new registrations, bringing the total of such premises to 55.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD

As in previous years the practice of submitting samples of various comestibles to the Public Health Laboratory has continued. The range of items has included those most likely to be the vectors of poisoning organisms: and it is very encouraging to be able to report that there were no unsatisfactory results. Nevertheless, there are no grounds for complacency: as it is very apparent that there are some members of the food trade who are woefully ignorant of even the most basic of hygiene practices. The only real answer to this problem is the proper education of food handlers, and it is disappointing to report that the very successful course organised under the auspices of the Royal Society of Health in 1967/68 at the local technical college could not be repeated for 1968/69 through lack of support.

The ever-present threat of a food-poisoning outbreak fully justifies the expense of routine sampling. During the year we purchased a small incubator and inaugurated the examination of equipment and utensils by means of the sausage agar technique. The Public Health Inspectors have taken a total of nearly 200 such samples during the year: and as a result they have been able to demonstrate in a most convincing manner both to management and employees any deficiencies in their cleaning techniques and routines.

Details of the various samples are given as follows :—

Cream.

Artificial and dairy cream are sampled both at the places of production and the retail shops. 94 artificial and 19 dairy cream samples were examined and found to be satisfactory.

Ice Cream.

During the year 37 samples of ice cream were taken. More than half were of Hot Mix from national manufacturers and were all satisfactory. The Cold Mix samples from local manufacturers were satisfactory: but there was a Grade 4 result from a sample of Soft Ice Cream—follow-up samples however proved satisfactory. It is significant to note that the number and visits of Soft Ice Cream vendors coming into the borough were considerably reduced from previous years, and as they rarely had regular rounds and times of calling it was very difficult at times to sample on the scale which was desirable.

Details are as follows :—

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Hot Mix	16	4	—	—
Cold Mix	9	1	1	—
Soft Ice Cream	5	—	—	1

Liquid Egg.

A total of 76 samples were taken, and of these 16 were pasteurised, 27 raw albumen, and 33 raw whole egg. All the pasteurised samples passed the Alpha Amylase test; and all the raw albumen samples were satisfactory. Twenty-nine of the raw whole egg were satisfactory; but four were affected by Salmonella of the following types—Livingstone (2), Fischerkietz, and Group C: and these were subsequently rendered innocuous by pasteurisation.

Meat Products, etc.

During the year 126 samples were taken, and all were found to be satisfactory. This is the first occasion when this has happened, and would seem to reflect the improved hygienic conditions which have been achieved in the various premises where the sampling took place.

Details of samples as follows:—

Beef—burger	1	Beef—corned	2
Beef—minced	9	Beef—pressed	1
Beef—silverside	1	Black pudding	2
Brains—pig	1	Brawn—pork	5
Faggot	8	Ham—boiled	12
Hogs pudding	1	Lamb	2
Liver and bacon croquette	1	Liver—pig's	1
Meat pie	1	Meat Spread	1
Ox tongue	6	Pasty	10
Polony	2	Pie—pork	4
Pie—veal, ham and egg	1	Pie—steak and kidney	1
Pork—burger	1	Pork—chopped	1
Pork—loin	1	Pork—luncheon meat	4
Pork—minced	1	Pork—roast	6
Pork—stuffed roll	4	Sausage—beef	8
Pork—shoulder	1	Sausage—garlic	1
Sausage—liver	2	Sausage—pork	11
Sausage roll	6	Salami	2
Scotch egg	1	Steak and kidney	1
Sweetbreads—ox	1	Veal—jellied	1

Water.

During the year the routine examination of the water supplies has continued. Each sample is checked for residual chlorine, and sent to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination.

A total of 231 samples were examined and these included 23 of raw water from the works and 6 from a private borehole. Of the remainder 188 were entirely satisfactory, but 14 others showed varying degrees of contamination. These unsatisfactory results were thoroughly investigated, and 10 of them were due to soil contamination which occurred during main laying in one particular district and was eventually rectified by a thorough flushing of the main in that area. The other four were due to faulty fittings in one household and after replacement of the offending items satisfactory results were obtained.

Food Inspection.

As a result of inspection of food at food shops and warehouses, the following commodities were condemned :—

TINNED FOOD

Fruit	...	...	1338 tins	Spaghetti	...	12	„
Fruit juice	...	...	90 „	Milk, cream	...	51	„
Meat	...	...	561 „	Rice, etc.	...	42	„
Vegetables	...	...	1298 „	Jam, syrup	...	26	„
Soup	...	...	33 „	Baby food	...	8	„
Fish	...	...	150 „	Miscellaneous	..	54	„
Fish products	...	...	12 „				

FROZEN FOODS

Fruit juice	...	...	32 tins	Pies	...	...	93 „
Meat	...	...	537 pkts	Cakes	...	...	18 „
Vegetables	...	...	490 „	Pastry	...	...	52 „
Fish	...	...	599 „	Miscellaneous	...	...	36 „
Fish products	...	...	77 „	Chicken	...	...	12
Chips	...	...	66 „				

OTHER FOODS

Cooked meat	...	...	152 lbs.	Dried peas, etc.	...	25	„
Bacon	...	...	289 „	Fruit & vegetables	...	502	„
Sausages	...	...	247 „	Biscuits	..	36	pkts.
Chicken	...	...	79 „	Cereals	...	182	„
Fish	...	...	203 „	Marzipan	...	271	„
Rice	...	...	102 „	Salt	...	162	„
Sugar	...	...	14 „	Jellies	...	102	„
Flour	...	...	1367 „	Miscellaneous	...	96	„
Butter	...	...	1029 „	Beverages	...	11	pkts.
Lard	...	...	30 „				and tins
Margarine	...	...	25 „	Jam, honey	...	9	jars
Cheese	...	...	40 „	Pies	...	569	
Dried fruit	...	...	300 „	Cakes	...	28	

FLOOD DAMAGED FOOD

Biscuits	...	...	729 lbs.	Fish	...	...	240 tins
Sugar	...	...	126 „	Meat	...	...	256 „
Dried fruit	...	...	34 „	Baby food	...	...	92 „
Sweets	...	...	315 „	Soup	...	...	120 „
Crisps	...	...	109 pkts.	Dried milk	...	...	66 pkts.
Vegetables	...	...	216 tins	Beverages	..	...	53 bottles
Fruit	...	...	521 „	Pickles, sauces	...	...	192 jars

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

Details of legal proceedings taken during the year are as follows:—

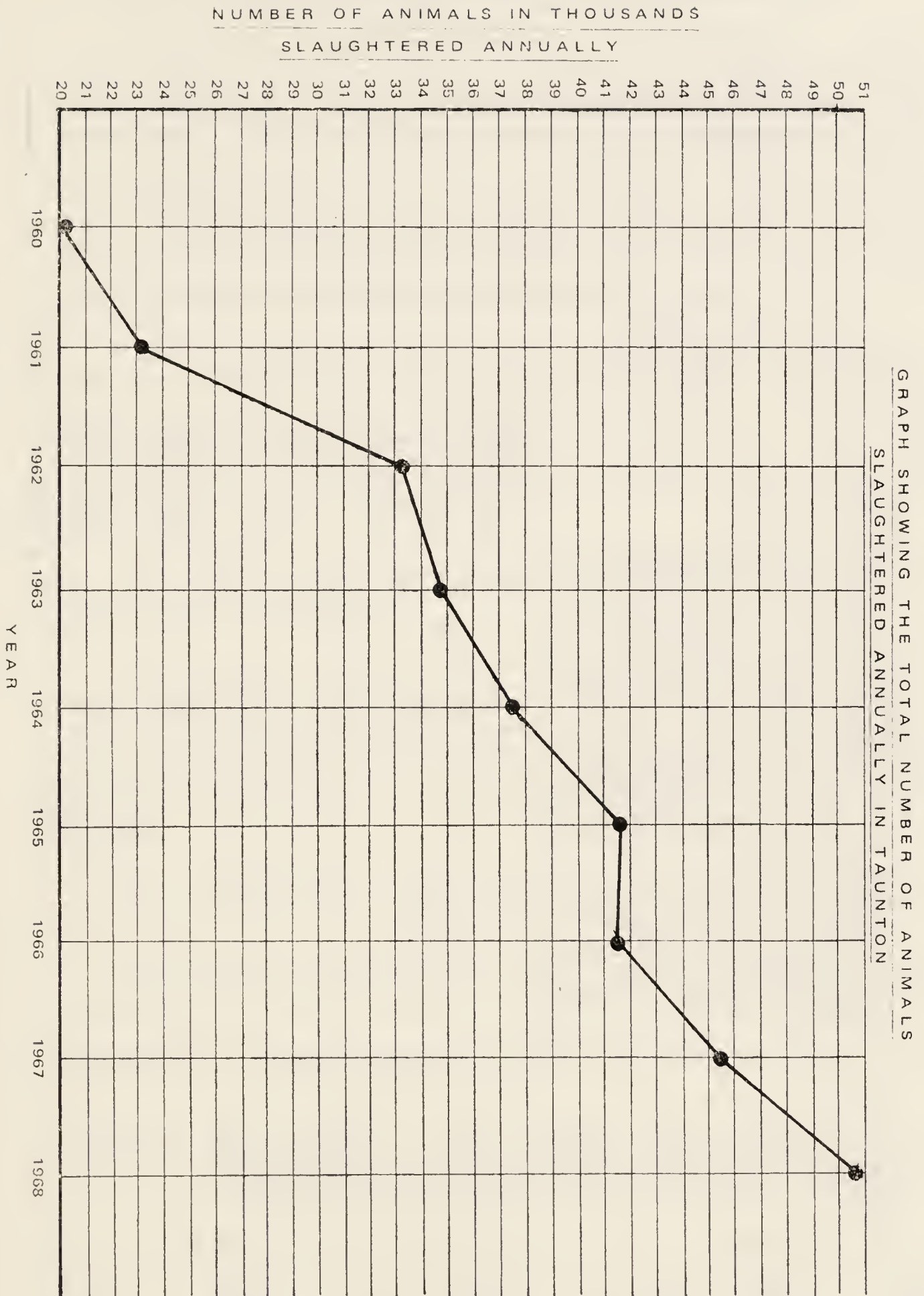
Offence	Result
1. Using tobacco whilst in a food room	£4 fine imposed
2. Tack in a loaf of bread	£20 fine imposed
3. Sale of malodorous meat pie	£30 fine imposed
4. Mould in sausage rolls	£20 fine imposed
5. Insanitary food premises	£50 fine imposed
6. Failing to clean equipment in food room ...	£25 fine imposed
7. Failing to display a "Wash your hands" notice.	£10 fine imposed
8. Mould in steak and kidney pie	£30 fine imposed
9. Failing to wear a washable head covering ...	Conditional discharge
10. Using tobacco in a food room	£5 fine imposed
11. Sale of unsound bacon	£20 fine imposed

MEAT INSPECTION

More time is spent on meat inspection than on any other single duty; as two Inspectors spend most of their working hours at a large bacon factory where there is an annual "kill" of nearly 50,000 pigs. This work is extremely demanding, and requires a very high degree of efficiency and expertise as the carcasses come through on the continuous line principle at the rate of over 100 per hour. As can be imagined such work makes very heavy demands on the inspectors both physically and mentally, as even a moment's relaxation can mean that some adverse condition in either carcase or offal could slip by undetected—with possibly disastrous results.

In addition there are two small private slaughterhouses which operate about three days in each week, and then mostly outside normal working hours, so that a certain amount of overtime is involved in inspecting the meat therein.

It is interesting to note the sustained increase in the total number of animals slaughtered annually during the last nine years. Since 1960 it has risen by 150% from 20,000 to over 50,000 in 1968. The accompanying graph illustrates the increase over the last nine years.



The following animals were slaughtered during the year :—

Beasts	...	...	...	...	...	237
Cows	...	...	...	...	...	31
Sheep and Lambs	...	...	...	...	1,579	
Calves	...	...	...	...	...	14
Pigs	...	...	...	...	...	49,074
Total	...	...	...	...	...	50,935

The inspection of the above carcasses revealed disease as set out in the following table :—

	Cattle (excl. cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	237	31	14	1,579	50,935 49,074
Number inspected	237	31	14	1,579	50,935 49,074
Whole carcasses condemned for disease other than T.B.	—	—	—	—	124
Carcasses from which some part or organ was condemned	17	—	—	21	15,259
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than T.B.	6.34%	—	—	1.33%	30.20%
Tuberculosis only—					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses from which some part or organ was condemned	—	—	—	—	908
Percentage of number inspected affected with T.B.	—	—	—	—	1.76%
Cysticercus Bovis—					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	—
Carcasses subjected to treatment by refrigeration	1	—	—	—	—
Carcasses generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

In addition, the following meat was condemned at butchers' premises on account of bone taint and other causes :—

Beef	...	...	...	...	397 lbs.
Lamb	...	...	...	...	51 „
Bacon	...	...	...	...	123 „
Pork	...	...	...	...	35 „
Offal	...	...	...	..	— „

METEOROLOGICAL READINGS

The year is noteworthy for the exceptionally heavy rainfall which occurred on 11th July and totalled 3.96 inches in 24 hours. This is the highest reading since records were first made over fifty years ago. As a result there was widespread flooding of moderate severity in the area, and had it not been for the extensive flood-prevention measures carried out by the Somerset River Authority there would have been inundation on an unprecedented scale as the fall was double that which fell on 26th October, 1960 when flooding in the borough reached disaster proportions.

The total rainfall of 31.25 inches was two inches more than in 1967, and 2.31 inches over the average. Rain fell on 182 days, and .04 inches or more was recorded on 136 days. The wettest month was July with 5.47 inches and the driest March with 1.10 inches, but it is interesting to note that rain fell on only 9 days in July compared with 12 in March!

The highest barometer reading was 30.56 in March, and the lowest 28.77 in December.

Total hours of sunshine was 1,404—over 200 less than in 1967, and 144 below the annual average. There were 84 sunless days as against 48 in 1967, and 20 above the average. No more than 13.5 hours were recorded on any one day. July was the sunniest month with 232 hours, and all the other summer months were well below average.

The average mean temperature showed very little variation. The highest was 84°F in July, and the lowest 20°F in February.

The figures below set out the main readings for 1968 as compared with those in the previous year and the annual averages.

	Mean Barometer	Mean Temperature	Hours of Sunshine	Sunless Days	Total Rainfall	Days rain fell	Days of .04 inches rain or more
1968	29.94	49.90	1,404.00	84	31.25	168	136
1967	29.98	50.38	1,610.00	48	29.25	182	136
Average	29.93	49.78	1,550.81	65	28.88	178	125

METEOROLOGICAL READINGS FOR 1968

Month	Barometer			Thermometer			Sunshine			Rainfall			
	Mean	Max.	Min.	Mean	Max.	Min.	Hours	Max. Reading	No. of Sunless Days	Inches	Days Rain fell	Days with 0.04in. or more	Max. Reading
January	30.05	30.46	29.47	42.50	64	22	34.25	6.0	13	2.31	12	10	.80
February	29.85	30.42	29.12	35.59	49	20	81.0	9.5	9	1.81	12	10	.51
March	30.00	30.56	29.20	44.68	68	27	142.75	9.5	5	1.10	12	9	.26
April	29.96	30.53	29.31	45.60	66	23	166.00	10.25	1	2.07	13	13	.32
May	29.95	30.42	29.51	50.53	74	33	186.75	13.5	3	2.70	17	17	.70
June	29.97	30.38	29.45	59.85	78	43	198.00	13.25	2	2.56	14	10	.58
July	30.11	30.42	29.61	60.26	84	42	232.00	13.50	—	5.47	9	7	3.96
August	29.95	30.36	29.51	60.84	81	46	131.75	13.50	7	1.62	12	9	.33
September	29.82	30.24	29.44	57.92	74	39	127.50	9.5	3	3.37	19	15	.65
October	29.96	30.22	29.35	55.58	67	38	56.50	7.5	13	2.02	16	9	.35
November	29.89	30.23	29.22	45.18	61	25	47.50	7.5	14	2.26	15	9	.54
December	29.81	30.31	28.77	39.82	56	25	43.00	5.0	14	3.88	18	13	.97
Total or Average ...	29.94	—	—	49.90	—	—	1404.0	—	84	31.25	168	136	—

Average Meteorological Readings at Taunton 1919 to 1968

BAROMETER

Annual Average	...	...	29.93
June	...	...	30.00
July	...	...	29.98
February	...	...	29.96
September	...	...	29.94
August	...	...	29.94
March	...	...	29.94
October	...	...	29.93
May	...	...	29.92
April	...	...	29.91
December	...	...	29.91
January	...	...	29.89
November	...	...	29.87

TEMPERATURE

Annual Average	...	...	49.62 Degr. F.
July	...	...	61.53
August	...	...	60.69
June	...	...	58.22
September	...	...	56.89
May	...	...	52.52
October	...	...	50.63
April	...	...	47.18
November	...	...	44.28
March	...	...	43.39
December	...	...	40.93
January	...	...	40.14
February	...	...	40.02

SUNSHINE IN HOURS

HOURS OF SUNSHINE

Annual Average	...	1548.61
June	...	218.08
May	...	205.44
July	...	202.71
August	...	187.88
April	...	150.82
September	...	130.66
March	...	118.37
October	...	101.06
February	...	74.36
November	...	59.83
January	...	46.41
December	...	39.95

NUMBER OF SUNLESS DAYS

Annual Average	...	65.74
July	...	1.37
August	...	1.47
June	...	1.61
May	...	2.00
September	...	3.00
April	...	3.06
October	...	4.40
March	...	5.06
February	...	8.11
November	...	9.74
January	...	13.42
December	...	13.88

Average Meteorological Readings at Taunton 1919 to 1968

RAINFALL

Annual Average	...	...	28.94 Inches
November	...	...	3.34
December	...	...	3.15
January	...	...	2.97
October	...	...	2.97
September	...	...	2.45
May	...	...	2.34
August	...	...	2.29
February	...	...	2.11
April	...	...	2.04
July	...	...	2.14
March	...	...	1.91
June	...	...	1.63

NUMBER OF DAYS RAIN FELL

Annual Average	...	...	178.22 Days
December	...	...	18.42
January	...	...	17.34
November	...	...	17.32
October	...	...	16.36
August	...	...	14.54
September	...	...	14.38
April	...	...	13.82
May	...	...	13.76
February	...	...	13.72
July	...	...	13.50
March	...	...	13.10
June	...	...	11.26

Days of Rainfall of .04 inches or more

Annual Average	...	...	125.43 Days
December	...	...	13.04
November	...	...	12.28
January	...	...	12.13
October	...	...	11.65
May	...	...	10.22
September	...	...	10.13
August	...	...	10.04
April	...	...	9.79
February	...	...	9.65
July	...	...	9.06
March	...	...	8.87
June	...	...	7.96

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

This work was carried out by the Public Health Inspectors assisted by the Technical Assistants—Mrs. J. Hayes until her retirement in June, and afterwards—Mrs. I. M. Bush.

The work of inspection had continued steadily throughout the year and besides making 73 detailed initial inspections 748 other visits were made. 118 informal notices were served and 111 were complied with completely. In many other instances the necessary remedial work was well in hand. Defective floors, passages and stairs were the main defects recorded. It was noticed that some premises had suffered light flood damage. General cleanliness and lighting were still a major concern. While most shops and offices were well lit preparation and stockrooms generally suffered from poor illumination. There were no exemptions or prosecutions.

Eighteen accidents—none of them fatal—were officially reported and in each case a thorough investigation was carried out. Accidents involving the handling of goods were the most frequent types reported. In one instance machinery was involved. An employee cut a finger while trying to adjust a piece of meat on a Berkel & Parnall Slicer (857649) whilst the blade was rotating. As the guard and weighting device were in place no further action was considered necessary.

The details of the work carried out during the year is as follows:—

TABLE A		(1) Class of premises	(2) Number of premises newly registered during the year	(3) Total number of registered premises at end of year	(4) Number of registered premises receiving one or more general inspections during the year
REGISTRATION AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS		Offices	5	192	16
		Retail Shops	18	334	46
		Wholesale Shops, Ware- houses	1	21	8
		Catering Establishments open to the public, Canteens ...	1	30	3
		Fuel Storage Depots ...	—	2	—
		TOTALS	25	579	73

TABLE B		Number of visits of all kinds (including General Inspections) to Registered Premises 748		
---------	--	--	--	--

TABLE C		(1) Class of workplace	(2) Number of persons employed
ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE	Offices ... ..	...	2,427
	Retail Shops ... ..	...	2,447
	Wholesale Departments, Ware- houses ... ..	...	217
	Catering Establishments open to the public ... ..	...	485
	Canteens ... ..	...	22
	Fuel Storage Depots ...	...	23
	TOTAL ... ..	...	5,621
TOTAL MALES ...			2,548
TOTAL FEMALES ...			3,073

During the year informal notices were served in respect of 812 items requiring attention in order to secure conformity with the Act.

These items are as detailed in the schedule below : —

Type of premises	Sanitary Accommodation								Washing Facilities							
	Ventilation	Lighting	Cleanliness	Identification	Additional Accommodation	Door Fastenings	Unsuit. accom. Discontinue use	Renew fittings	Ventilation	Lighting	Cleanliness	Toilet Requisites	Renew Fittings	Hot Water Supply	Additional accomodation	Drinking water
Shops	15	11	27	6	2	5	—	10	1	2	13	19	4	15	8	5
Offices	1	2	9	3	—	1	—	1	—	1	4	3	1	1	—	2
Catering Premises	1	1	7	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	3	—	1	—	1	—
Wholesale ware-houses	5	1	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	11	—	—
Total	22	15	45	10	3	7	—	13	1	5	21	22	6	28	9	7

Other Items

Cleanliness	Overcrowding	Seating Facilities	Staircases Floors, Passages,	Temperature	Ventilation	Lighting	Accommodation for Clothing	Machinery	First-Aid	Safety	Abstract of the Act	Waste Bins	Registrations	Unsuit. accom. Discontinue use	Noise	
46	—	3	78	33	36	47	9	12	31	19	14	2	2	1	—	477
15	1	3	37	6	4	23	2	4	8	10	1	—	—	—	1	144
17	—	—	24	11	4	14	3	7	5	5	3	—	2	1	—	114
4	2	3	16	3	—	12	4	—	4	5	1	—	—	—	—	77
82	3	9	155	53	44	96	18	23	48	39	19	2	4	2	1	812

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes as to provisions as to health

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	19	22	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	243	937	3	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) ...	16	14	5	—
TOTAL	378	973	8	—

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	2	2	—	1	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	—	3	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	7	7	—	2	—
(c) Not separate for Sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	1	1	—	—	—
TOTAL	13	13	—	6	—

OUTWORK (Sections 133 and 134)

Nature of Work	No. of out-workers in August list	Section 133		Section 134	
		No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Making of wearing apparel ...	249	—	—	—	—

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